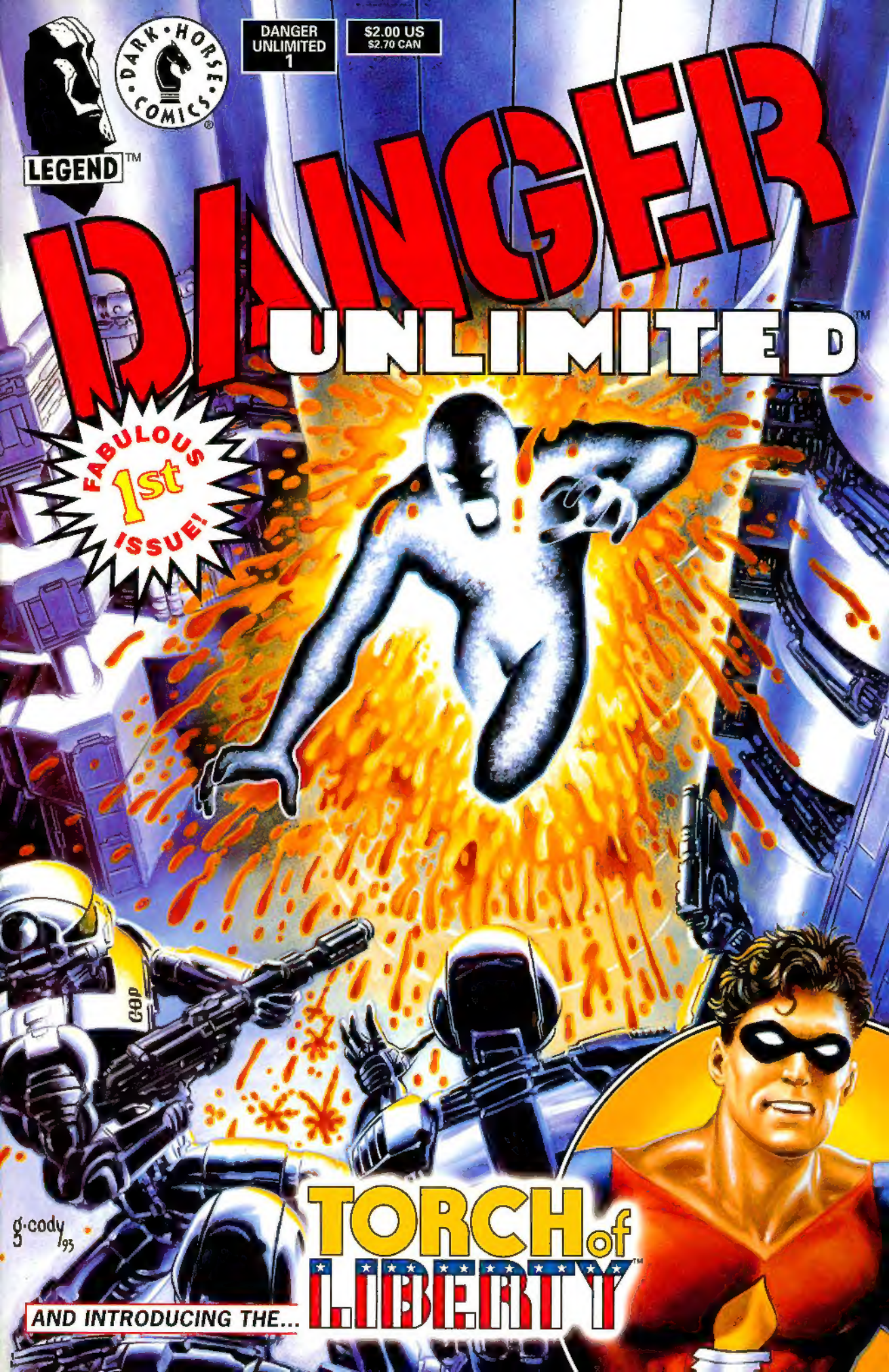
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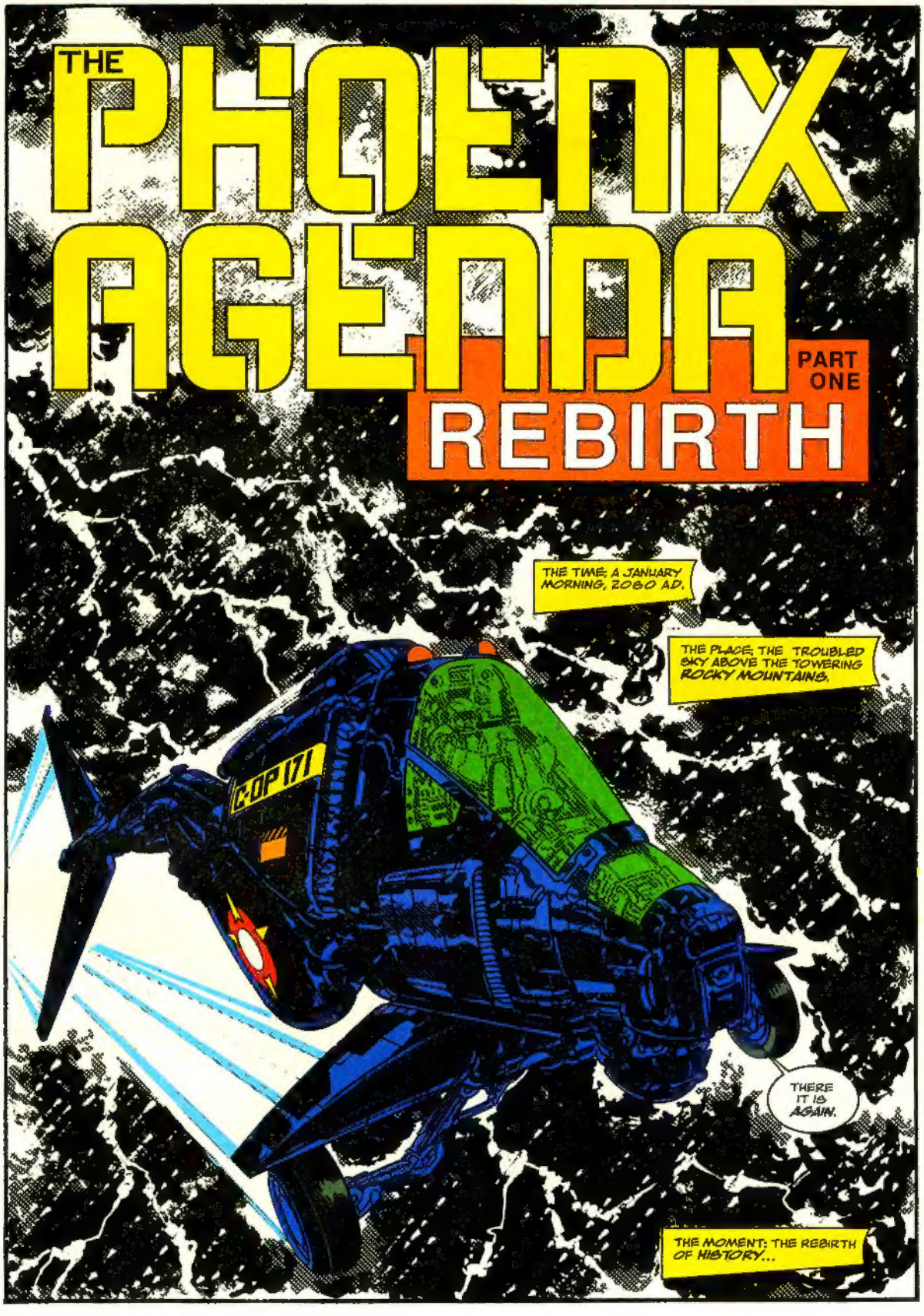
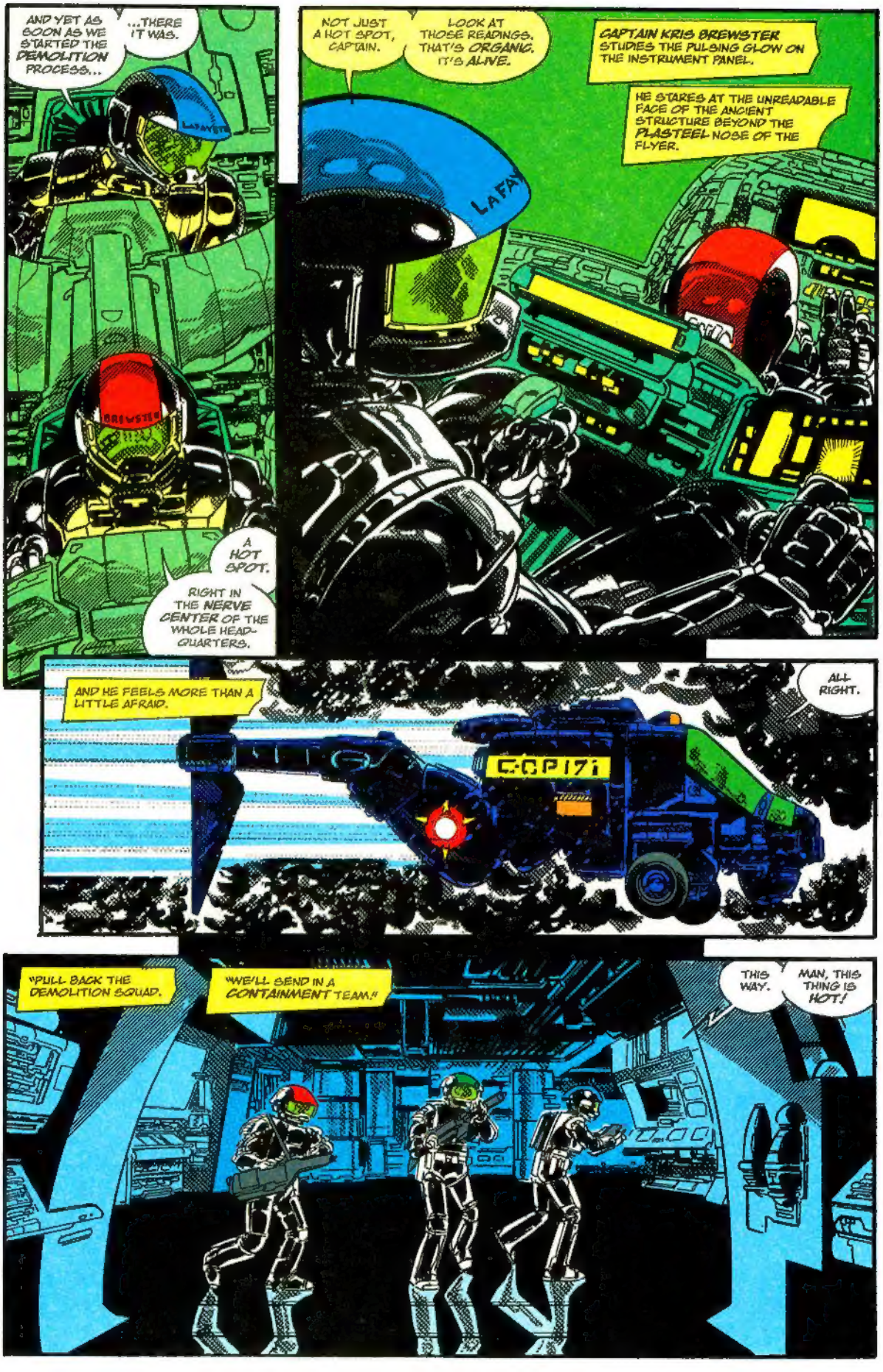
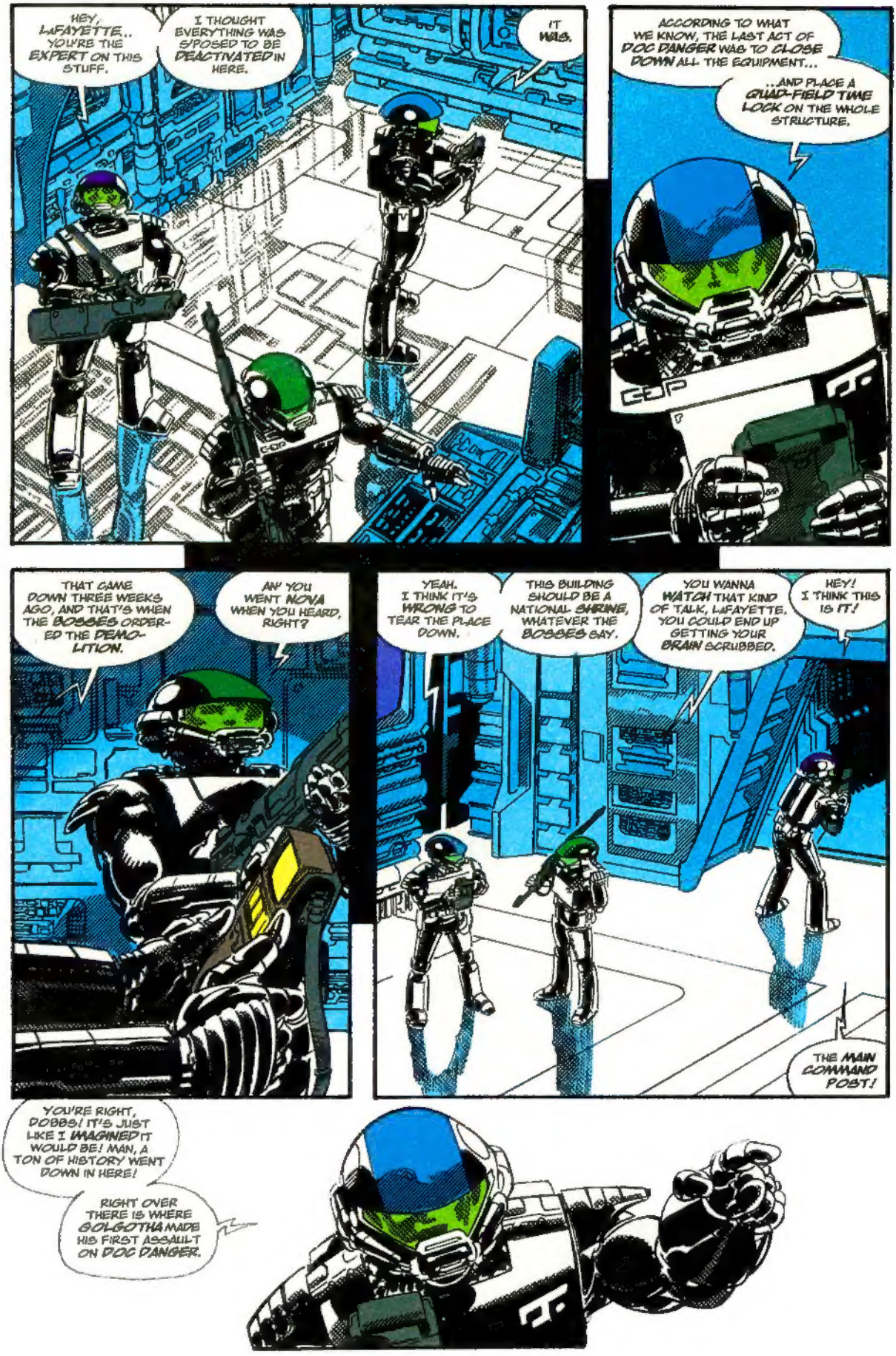

THE PHOENIX AGENDA
PART ONE
REBIRTH
THE TIME: A JANUARY MORNING, 2080 A.D.
THE PLACE: THE TROUBLED SKY ABOVE THE TOWERING ROCKY MOUNTAINS.
COP 171
THERE IT IS AGAIN.
THE MOMENT: THE REBIRTH OF HISTORY...

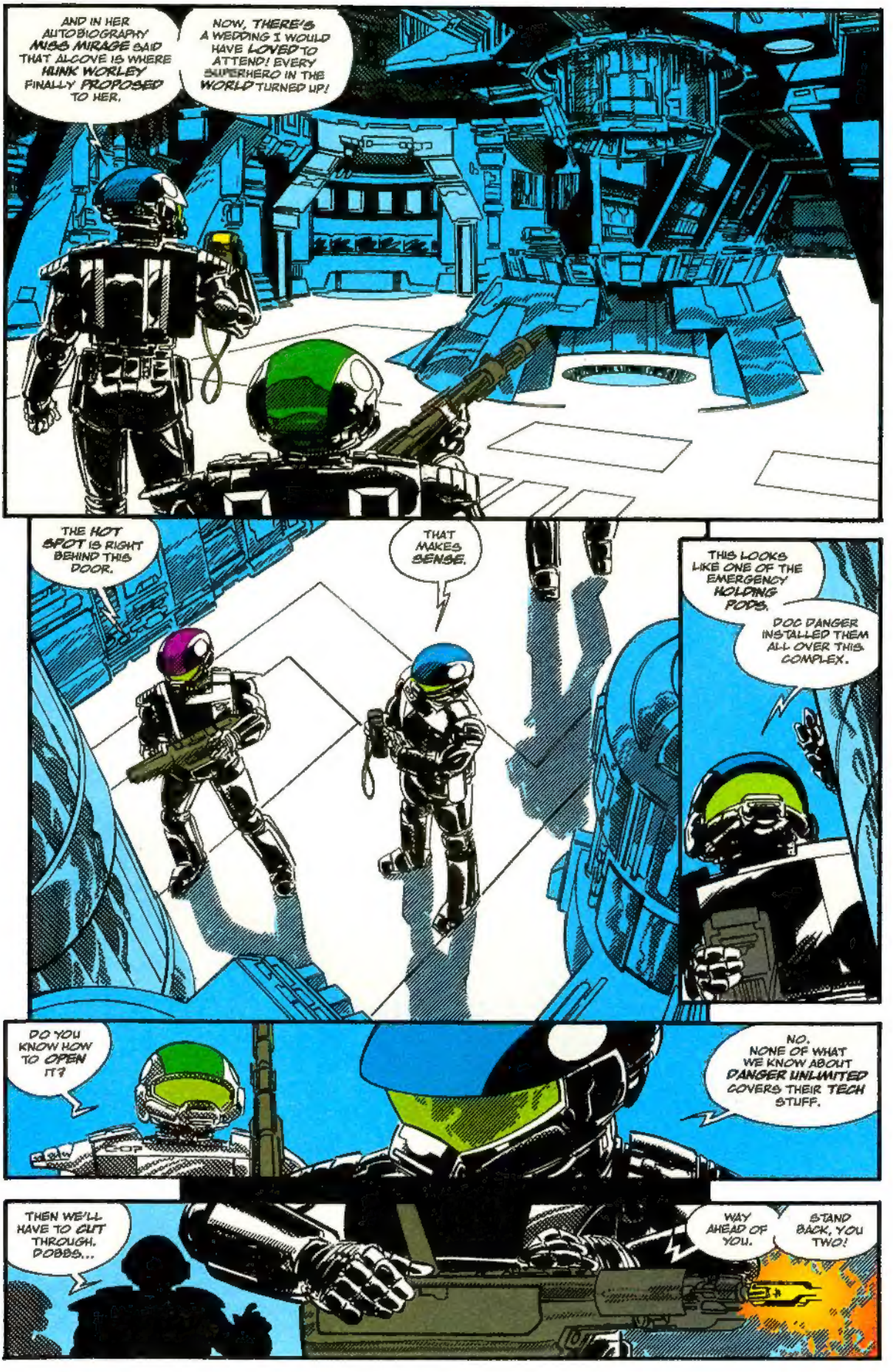
SKILLED HANDS MANIPULATE CONTROLS, COAXING THE C-OP FLYER CLOSER TO THE FORBIDDING COMPLEX.

THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANYTHING THERE. THE WHOLE BUILDING HAS BEEN SEALED FOR NEARLY SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS.

C-OP


AND YET AS SOON AS WE STARTED THE DEMOLITION PROCESS...
...THERE IT WAS.
LAFAYETTE
BREWSTER
A HOT SPOT.
RIGHT IN THE NERVE CENTER OF THE WHOLE HEADQUARTERS.
NOT JUST A HOT SPOT, CAPTAIN.
LOOK AT THOSE READINGS. THAT'S ORGANIC. IT'S ALIVE.
CAPTAIN KRIS BREWSTER STUDIES THE PULSING GLOW ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL.
HE STARES AT THE UNREADABLE FACE OF THE ANCIENT STRUCTURE BEYOND THE PLASTEEL NOSE OF THE FLYER.
LAFAY
AND HE FEELS MORE THAN A LITTLE AFRAID.
ALL RIGHT.
"PULL BACK THE DEMOLITION SQUAD.
"WE'LL SEND IN A CONTAINMENT TEAM."
THIS WAY.
MAN, THIS THING IS HOT!

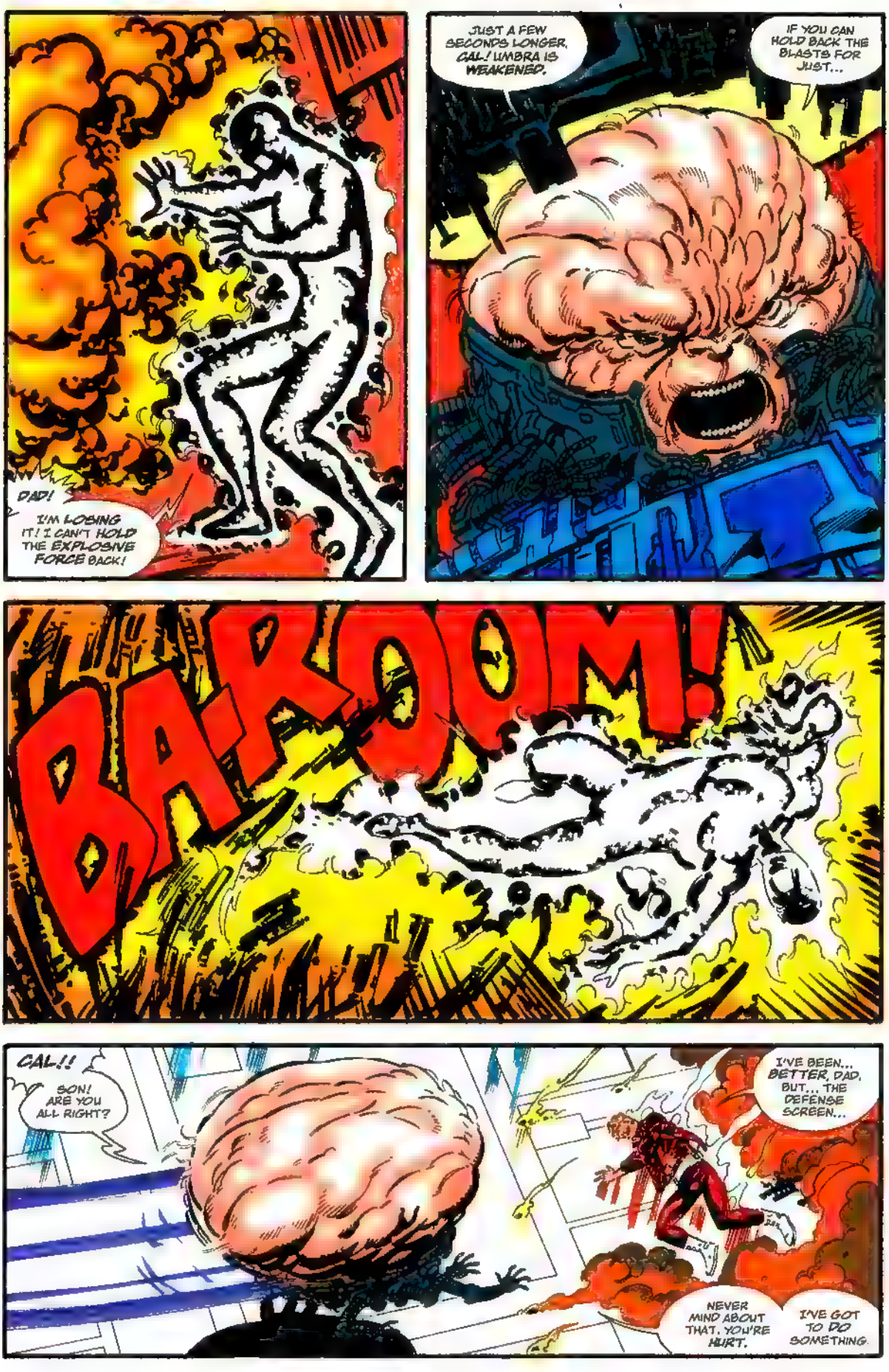

HEY, LAFAYETTE.. YOU'RE THE EXPERT ON THIS STUFF.
I THOUGHT EVERYTHING WAS S'POSED TO BE DEACTIVATED IN HERE.
IT WAS.
ACCORDING TO WHAT WE KNOW, THE LAST ACT OF DOC DANGER WAS TO CLOSE DOWN ALL THE EQUIPMENT...
...AND PLACE A QUAD-FIELD TIME LOCK ON THE WHOLE STRUCTURE.
THAT CAME DOWN THREE WEEKS AGO, AND THAT'S WHEN THE BOSSES ORDERED THE DEMOLITION.
AN' YOU WENT NOVA WHEN YOU HEARD, RIGHT?
YEAH. I THINK IT'S WRONG TO TEAR THE PLACE DOWN.
THIS BUILDING SHOULD BE A NATIONAL SHRINE, WHATEVER THE BOSSES SAY.
YOU WANNA WATCH THAT KIND OF TALK, LAFAYETTE. YOU COULD END UP GETTING YOUR BRAIN SCRUBBED.
HEY! I THINK THIS IS IT!
THE MAIN COMMAND POST!
YOU'RE RIGHT, DOBBS! IT'S JUST LIKE I IMAGINED IT WOULD BE! MAN, A TON OF HISTORY WENT DOWN IN HERE!
RIGHT OVER THERE IS WHERE GOLGOTHA MADE HIS FIRST ASSAULT ON DOC DANGER.

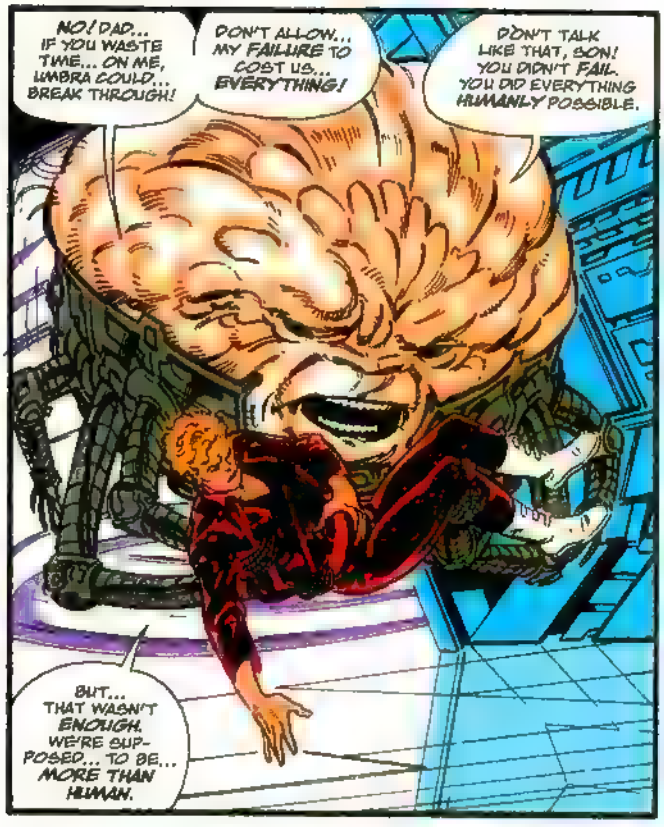

AND IN HER AUTOBIOGRAPHY MISS MIRAGE SAID THAT ALCOVE IS WHERE HUNK WORLEY FINALLY PROPOSED TO HER.
NOW, THERE'S A WEDDING I WOULD HAVE LOVED TO ATTEND! EVERY SUPERHERO IN THE WORLD TURNED UP!
THE HOT SPOT IS RIGHT BEHIND THIS DOOR.
THAT MAKES SENSE.
THIS LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THE EMERGENCY HOLDING PODS.
DOC DANGER INSTALLED THEM ALL OVER THIS COMPLEX.
DO YOU KNOW HOW TO OPEN IT?
NO. NONE OF WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT DANGER UNLIMITED COVERS THEIR TECH STUFF.
THEN WE'LL HAVE TO CUT THROUGH. DOBBS...
WAY AHEAD OF YOU.
STAND BACK, YOU TWO!

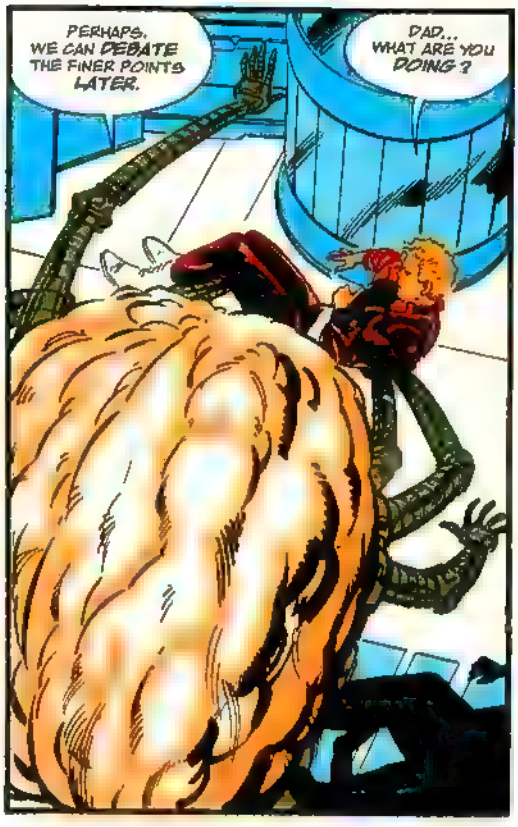
SHADOWS DANCE IN STARK RELIEF AS A FLAME AS BRIGHT AND HOT AS THE SUN ITSELF LICKS FROM THE CUTTING TORCH.
AND ALMOST IMMEDIATELY...
HEY! SOMETHING'S GOIN' ON IN THERE!
YES! I'VE GOT IT TOO. TEMPERATURE INCREASING INSIDE THE POD.
THE CUTTER..?
NEGATIVE, MORGAN. IT'S THE ORGANISM.
IT'S CHANNELING THE HEAT FROM DOBBS' KNIFE AND MULTIPLYING IT. WHICH IS JUST WHAT THERMAL USED TO DO!
CAN THE FAIRY TALES, LAFAYETTE!
HE'S DEAD. ALL THE MEMBERS OF DANGER UNLIMITED WERE KILLED SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.
WE DON'T KNOW THAT, MORGAN.
WE ONLY KNOW UMBRA ATTACKED THEM ONE LAST TIME, AND DURING THAT BATTLE DOC DANGER SEALED THE COMPLEX.
HEY! LOOK!!

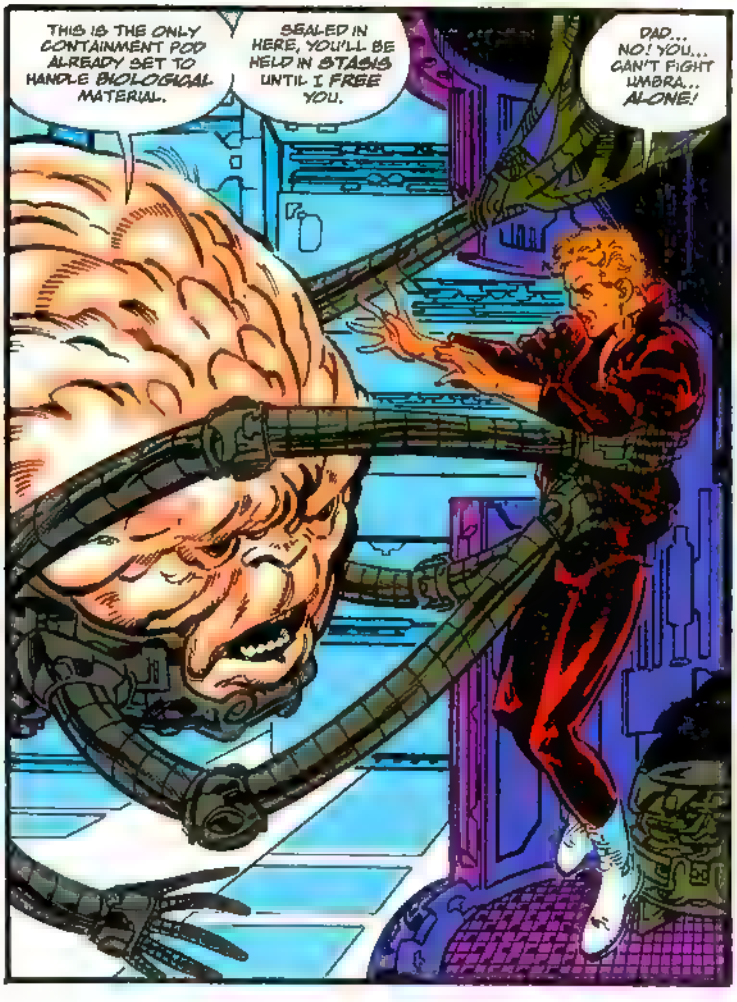
IT'S HIM! IT'S REALLY HIM!

HE'S IN TROUBLE!
LAFAYETTE! KEEP BACK! YOUR SUIT ISN'T STRONG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND THAT HEAT!
HE'S OVER-LOADING!
IT USED TO HAPPEN SOMETIMES WHEN HE WAS A KID, RIGHT AFTER HE FIRST GOT HIS POWERS!
WAIT A MINUTE! THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE IN THERE! SOMETHING ELSE ALIVE.
YOU'RE RIGHT!
I CAN'T GET A FIX, BUT WHATEVER IT IS... IT'S SERIOUSLY UNSTABLE. IT'S GONNA...


DAD!
I'M LOSING IT! I CAN'T HOLD THE EXPLOSIVE FORCE BACK!
JUST A FEW SECONDS LONGER, CAL! UMBRA IS WEAKENED.
IF YOU CAN HOLD BACK THE BLASTS FOR JUST...
BA-BOOM!
CAL!!
SON! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'VE BEEN... BETTER, DAD, BUT... THE DEFENSE SCREEN...
NEVER MIND ABOUT THAT. YOU'RE HURT.
I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING.


NO! DAD... IF YOU WASTE TIME... ON ME, UMBRA COULD... BREAK THROUGH!
DON'T ALLOW... MY FAILURE TO COST US... EVERYTHING!
DON'T TALK LIKE THAT, SON! YOU DIDN'T FAIL. YOU DID EVERYTHING HUMANLY POSSIBLE.
BUT... THAT WASN'T ENOUGH. WE'RE SUPPOSED... TO BE... MORE THAN HUMAN.


PERHAPS. WE CAN DEBATE THE FINER POINTS LATER.
DAD... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?


THIS IS THE ONLY CONTAINMENT POD ALREADY SET TO HANDLE BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.
SEALED IN HERE, YOU'LL BE HELD IN STASIS UNTIL I FREE YOU.
DAD... NO! YOU... CAN'T FIGHT UMBRA... ALONE!

I MUST, CALVIN.
AND, IN THE END, PERHAPS THAT IS HOW IT WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO BE...
DAD! NO!

NO- OOHH!!
EASY, FELLA.
DON'T MOVE YET.
YOU'VE BEEN IN A COMA FOR ALMOST TWO WEEKS.
COMA? TWO WEEKS?
BUT... THAT BATTLE, THAT... MAN. I CALLED HIM "DAD."
WHAT'S GOING ON?
I'LL HANDLE THIS NOW, DOCTOR.

WHO...?
NAME'S BREWSTER. CAPTAIN KRIS BREWSTER, NOR-AM C-OPS.
AND YOU, I TAKE IT, ARE CALVIN CARSON, A.K.A. THERMAL...?
I... I DON'T KNOW.
WHAT IS THIS PLACE? WHAT'S "NORAM?" WHAT ARE "C-OPS?"
CONTROL OPERATIVES. SOMETHING LIKE WHAT YOU WOULD HAVE CALLED POLICE. WE'RE IN CHARGE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN C-ZONE.
THAT'S CONTINENTAL ZONE.
LOOK... MAYBE THE EASIEST WAY TO START THIS...
...WOULD BE TO JUST HAVE YOU TAKE A LOOK OUT THE WINDOW.
THE WINDOW ?
AND JUST WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO...

...SEE..?

WHAT IN ?

WHERE AM I ??

DENVER. ABOUT A HUNDRED KILOMETERS FROM YOUR OLD HEADQUARTERS.

DENVER? HEADQUARTERS? COMMANDER BREWSTER...

WHAT IN BLUE BLAZES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

WHO DO YOU THINK I AM??

YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA DO YOU? THE MEDICS PREDICTED THAT AFTER SO LONG... WELL, THAT WAS WHY I ORDERED THEM TO TRY THE MNEMONIC STIMULATOR.

IT'S A GADGET WE USE FOR INTERROGATING UNCOOPERATIVE SUSPECTS. BUT...

ALL RIGHT... LET ME TELL YOU THE STORY AS WE THINK IT HAPPENED...

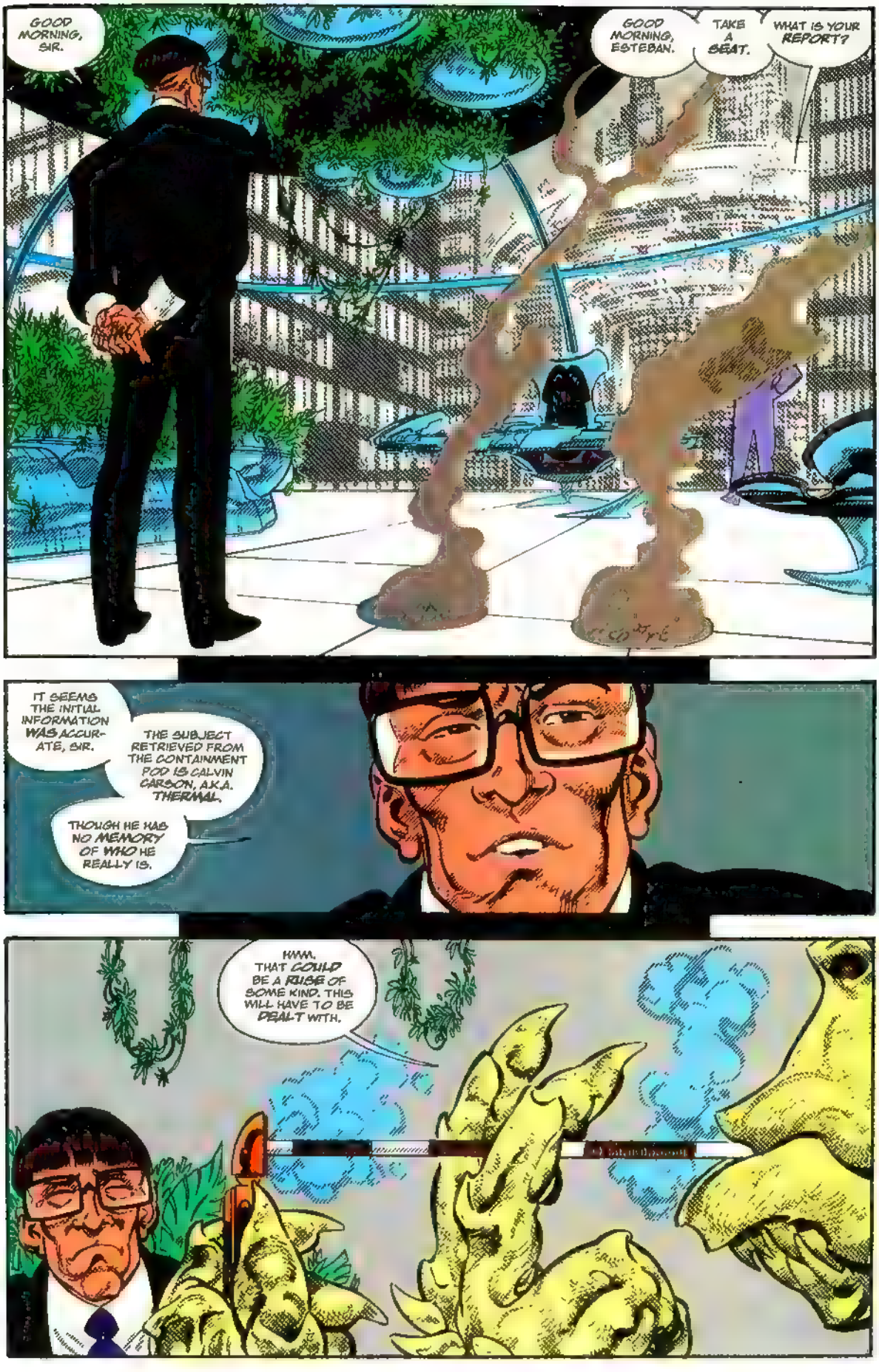
MEANWHILE...
... SIXTY FLOORS BELOW...
IT'S AMAZING. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.
IT'S SOME KIND OF ORGANIC, ISN'T IT?
YES. A VERY SPECIAL ORGANIC. UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS, THIS IS GUNK.
THE VERY SUBSTANCE WHICH GAVE THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF DANGER UNLIMITED THEIR SUPERHUMAN POWERS.
OH YEAH? I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE SUCH AN EXPERT, PROFESSOR.
THAT'S CLASSIFIED INFORMATION, AFTER ALL.
I KNOW. ALL DATA ON HUMAN SUPER POWERS IS FORBIDDEN.
STILL... ONE HEARS THINGS.
AND IF ONE IS SMART, ONE FORGETS THEM AS SOON AS THEY'RE HEARD.
YOU KNOW WHAT THE BOSSES DO TO PEOPLE WHO LEARN THINGS THEY'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO.
YES, I KNOW.
WHAT ABOUT THE PATIENT LAFAYETTE?
ANY CHANGE?
IF YOU MEAN ANY IMPROVEMENT, NO.
ALL RIGHT. CONTINUE THE STANDARD ANALYSIS.
I'M GOING TO RUN DOWN AND HAVE A LOOK FOR MYSELF.
"I'LL BE BACK WITHIN THE HOUR."
AH, PROFESSOR PALMENTER. COME TO SEE OUR PATIENT?
YES. THERE'S BEEN NO CHANGE, I UNDERSTAND?

JUDGE FOR YOURSELF, PROFESSOR.

LAFAYETTE? LAFAYETTE, CAN YOU HEAR ME?
NOTHING. E.E.G. FLAT AS A BOARD.
I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYONE IN THERE ANY-MORE.
MAYBE NOT.
BUT IF THIS IS REALLY THE RESULT OF EXPO-SURE TO THAT... SUBSTANCE...
...I DON'T THINK WE DARE DO ANY-THING BUT CONTAIN THE BODY UNTIL MY TESTS ARE COMPLETE...
...AND WE HOPEFULLY HAVE SOME KIND OF IDEA WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH.
WHATEVER YOU SAY, PROF-ESSOR.
YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF THIS WHOLE CASE.
I KNOW. I ONLY WISH I HAD THE BEGINNING OF AN IDEA WHAT TO EXPECT...
...UH-HUH...
GOOD LORD!
LAFAYETTE!!

WHAT... HAPPENED TO ME?

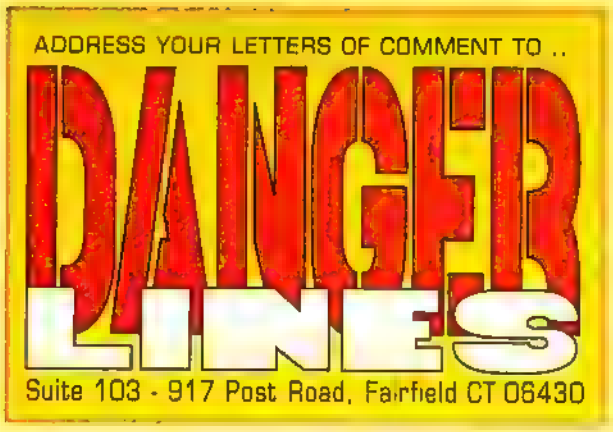
CHICAGO...
PRESENT CAPITAL OF THE NORTH AMERICAN ZONE.
AND, IN THE NEWEST OF SEVERAL NEW TOWERS...
HE'LL SEE YOU NOW.
WHAT'S HIS MOOD TODAY?
PRETTY GOOD. BUT I DON'T THINK HE'S GONNA LIKE WHAT YOU HAVE TO TELL HIM.


GOOD MORNING, SIR.
GOOD MORNING, ESTEBAN.
TAKE A SEAT.
WHAT IS YOUR REPORT?
IT SEEMS THE INITIAL INFORMATION WAS ACCURATE, SIR.
THE SUBJECT RETRIEVED FROM THE CONTAINMENT POD IS CALVIN CARSON, A.K.A. THERMAL.
THOUGH HE HAS NO MEMORY OF WHO HE REALLY IS.
HMM. THAT COULD BE A RUSE OF SOME KIND. THIS WILL HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH.

NEXT ISSUE:

DISCOVERY

IN THIRTY DAYS



(In issue #3 I'll begin sampling some of the mail received in response to the preview copies of ***Danger Unlimited*** #1 Dark Horse sent out. This time, though, some ramblings on the beginnings of this title...)

Danger Unlimited is meant to be everything ***John Byrne's Next Men*** isn't.

Okay, I'll admit it: When people at the 1993 San Diego Comic Book Convention—where ***DU*** was previewed—asked me what it was about, I got snotty and said "Well, since nobody else is doing the Fantastic Four, I thought I would."

But it hasn't worked that way. In one of the columns I wrote for ***JBNM*** I mentioned how Stan Lee has always maintained that the best way to write these things is to let the characters tell you what the stories are. I started out doing that with ***DU*** and right away the characters told me who they *weren't*, and they *weren't* the Fantastic Four.

Oh, sure, you'll find that the *tone* of ***DU*** is very much what I set out to create in the time I was writing and drawing ***Fantastic Four*** for Marvel, but these are different people with different powers and different relationships. Before this first issue was more than half done I knew ***DU*** would never be a clone of ***FF***, just as ***JBNM*** is not the clone of ***X-Men*** so many early reviewers seemed to think it would be. It seems I can't copy myself even when that's what I set out to do.

Some of you might be wondering what's going on. Does ***Danger Unlimited*** represent a reversal of thinking on my part? After two and a half years of "mature" stuff in ***JBNM,*** have I had my fill?

Well, no. But I am finding myself kind of nostalgic for the books I used to do for, say, Marvel. Not mindless slugfests any of them, but considerably more *cosmic* than ***JBNM.***

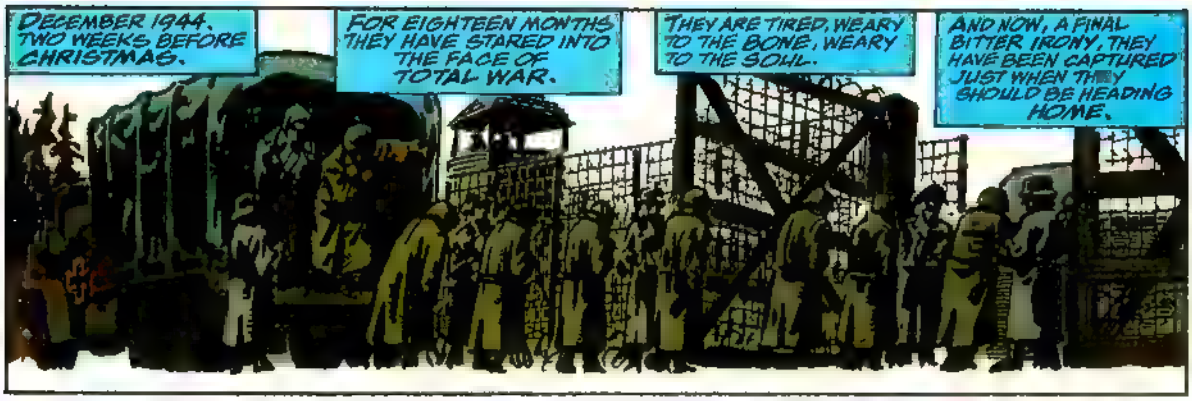
Thus, ***Danger Unlimited.***

And some of you, I'll bet, will be surprised to find John Byrne doing "grim and gritty." But you shouldn't be. I was GaGing before a lot of people—most notably toward the end of my run on ***Uncanny X-Men***, and I only stopped because I thought it was something of a dead end. (Just like me not to see I was actually on the leading edge of a wave which would soon swamp the whole industry! Curiously enough, I was even playing with the leather-belts-buckles-and-ponytails motifs before most people got around to 'em—check my redesigned Doc Sampson in ***Incredible Hulk***, f'rinstance.)

Like ***Next Men***—though much more extensively—I decided part of the story should take place in the future so I could have my cake and eat it too. As I've commented in ***JBNM***, comic-book time has always been a bit of a bother, as characters remain eternally young while the world ages around them. But with a book which takes place both in the future and in the past, I could do one part (the past) in something like real time, at least to the extent of making specific date references, and the other part (the future) in comic-book time. This also affords me the opportunity to make all kinds of references to past stories which we have not yet seen, and—especially insidious, if I do say so myself—tell background stories out of sequence. So, in this issue, we meet Doc Danger at the (apparent) *end* of his career before we see the *beginning* (next issue). And, yes, I intend to break another of my ***Next Men*** rules and retrofit this universe. There will be other "Silver Age" characters, and "Golden Age" characters, too.

And there it is: ***Danger Unlimited.*** Next issue I'll use this space to talk a little bit about some of the directions I'll be taking with this book—and some of the things I hope will make it just a wee bit different from every other superhero title on the market. Hope to see you then...

John


DECEMBER 1944. TWO WEEKS BEFORE CHRISTMAS.
FOR EIGHTEEN MONTHS THEY HAVE STARED INTO THE FACE OF TOTAL WAR.
THEY ARE TIRED, WEARY TO THE BONE, WEARY TO THE SOUL.
AND NOW, A FINAL BITTER IRONY. THEY HAVE BEEN CAPTURED JUST WHEN THEY SHOULD BE HEADING HOME.

ONE... TWO... THREE... FOUR...
KEEP MOVING! KEEP MOVING! FOR YOU THE WAR IS OVER!

EIGHT... NINE... TEN...
HMMM...

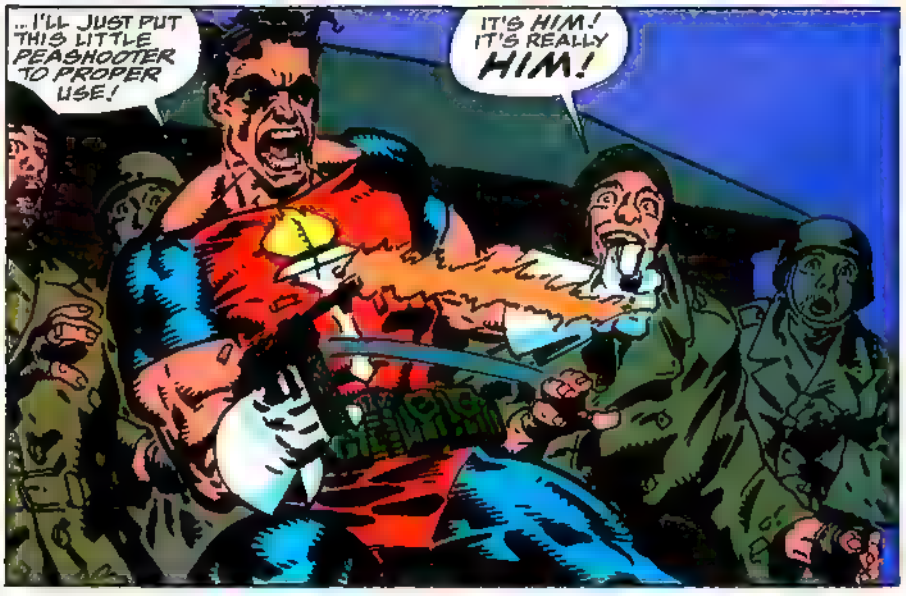
MOST PECULIAR.
IT WOULD SEEM WE HAVE MORE PRISONERS NOW THAN WHEN WE LOADED THEM ON THE TRUCK.

GUARDS! INSPECT THE PRISONERS!
WE HAVE A RAT AMONG THE MICE.
VAS-?

THOSE BOOTS ARE NOT STANDARD AMERIKANNER ARMY ISSUE!
YOU'RE RIGHT.

BUT THEN I'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED IN DRESSING FOR THE OCCASION.
THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS I'M CALLED--
TORCH of LIBERTY
THE GREAT ESCAPE
A STIRRING SAGA OF AMERICA AT WAR... PENCILLED, INKED AND COLORED BY KIERON DWYER
CREATED AND WRITTEN BY JOHN BYRNE

AND NOW, FRITZ--
--IF YOU DON'T MIND...


..I'LL JUST PUT THIS LITTLE PEASHOOTER TO PROPER USE!
IT'S HIM! IT'S REALLY HIM!

THEY ARE THE DREGS.
NOT FIT FOR ACTIVE COMBAT, EVEN IN THE LAST HARD DAYS OF THE WAR.
THEY HAVE BEEN STATIONED AT THIS CAMP TOO LONG.
IF THEY EVER KNEW...
...THEY HAVE LONG SINCE FORGOTTEN HOW TO BE SOLDIERS.
THE TORCH OF LIBERTY IS A BLUE AND SCARLET BLUR IN THEIR MIDST.
A BLUR WHOSE CHATTERING MACHINE GUN SPITS UNERRING DEATH.
DON'T REALLY LIKE DOING THIS...
...THEY'RE ALL LONG PAST BEING ANY KIND OF MATCH FOR ME.
BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR SENTIMENT OR SUBTLETY.
COME ON, SOLDIERS.

GERMAN GUNS ARE JUST AS EASY TO USE AS AMERICAN.
LET'S SHOW THESE RATS THIS WAR IS ONLY OVER WHEN WE SAY SO!
IN AN INSTANT THE CAMP IS TRANSFORMED.
UP AND AT 'EM, MEN! YOU'RE FREE!
A PLACE OF DESOLATION AND DESPAIR..
FREE?
GUNS?
...BECOMES AN EXPLOSION OF SUDDEN HOPE!
FREE!!
GUNS!!

THEY RIP THROUGH THEIR ERSTWHILE PRISON LIKE A CRIMSON TIDE OF DEATH.
HEARTS AND LIMBS DRAINED OF EVERY VESTIGE OF LIFE...
...FIND STRENGTH IN UNLEASHED ANGER...
...IN THE BATTLECRY OF THE TORCH OF LIBERTY.
IN LESS TIME THAN IT TAKES TO TELL, IT IS OVER.
SUCH GERMANS AS ARE NOT DEAD FLEE OR SURRENDER.
A SUDDEN RUSH OF NUMBING FATIGUE ENGULFS THE LIBERATED PRISONERS.
UNTIL...
COME ON, YANKS!
INTO THE TRUCKS! WE'VE GOT A LONG WAY YET TO GO BEFORE WE'RE OUT OF DANGER!
AND ONCE AGAIN WEARINESS IS FORGOTTEN.
ONCE AGAIN THE MEN STAND TALL AND PROUD.
AND THE TORCH OF LIBERTY FEELS HIS HEART SWELL AS HE LOOKS INTO THE LAUGHING FACES OF THOSE WHO HAVE TRULY EARNED THE NAME HERO.

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS LATER...
THE WIND WHISTLING THROUGH THE BARBED WIRE IS COLDER THAN THE WINTER DAY DEMANDS.
THE GROWL OF THE MERCEDES STAFF CAR IS NOT LOUD ENOUGH TO DROWN THE SHARP REPORTS OF LUGERS FIRED AT CLOSE RANGE.
THERE IS NO HINT OF SORROW OR COMPASSION ON THE FACE OF THE GESTAPO OFFICER AS HE APPROACHES THE CAR...
WE ARE NEARLY DONE HERE. I HAVE ORDERED THE SUMMARY EXECUTION OF THOSE FEW DOLTS FOOLISH ENOUGH TO SURVIVE THE AMERIKANNER ESCAPE.
GOOD.
ONE WORD, BUT IT FREEZES THE MARROW IN THE OFFICER'S BONES...
IT IS A VOICE HE HAS HEARD ONLY ONCE BEFORE...
...AND PRAYED EACH NIGHT SINCE THAT HE MIGHT NEVER HEAR AGAIN!
YOU HAVE DONE WELL, COLONEL.
YOU SHALL FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN MY REPORT TO THE FUEHRER.
I KNOW WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AND HE SHALL BE MADE TO PAY MOST DEARLY!
THIS GOLGOTHA SWEARS!

WHO IS THE TORCH OF LIBERTY?
WHAT IS THE TERRIBLE SECRET OF GOLGOTHA?
FIND OUT NEXT ISSUE IN--

BATTLECRY!

FINISH LINE

Last month I gave you an example of the interactive nature of comics stories: the way words and pictures interact—with each other and with the readers' own sets of expectations—to create a sense of reality and action in the readers' minds. To me, this has always been one of the most exciting aspects of the medium, and has made this job enjoyable even during times of high stress and impending deadline doom.

I thought this month I'd let some of the top creators in comics explain what it is about comics that attracted them in the first place, and what keeps them interested in the medium year after year. Specifically, I asked, "Why comics? Why not write novels or screenplays, or draw storyboards or commercial art, or produce 'Fine Art'?" I started out with the two writer/artists primarily responsible for the creation of the new **Legend** imprint, **John Byrne** and **Frank Miller**.

Byrne, creator/writer/artist of ***Next Men*** and the new ***Danger Unlimited*** series, had this to say about why he loves comics: "Producing a comic book—writing and drawing one on your own—is a lot like making a movie for which you design all of the sets, play all of the parts, *and* get to direct. The advantage is that you have actors who never miss their cues. I'd say having that control is a major reason I work in comics."

Miller, creator/writer/artist of ***Sin City*** and the co-creator/writer of the upcoming ***Martha Washington Goes to War*** and ***The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot*** series, echoed Byrne's comments regarding control of his own creations: "I grew up reading and loving comics, and I loved to write and draw my own. I knew from when I was young that comics were what I wanted to do. One of the most enjoyable things about comics is the amazing amount of freedom you have compared to other mediums. Plus, it's an egomaniac's dream to be in control of the whole production."

Obviously, there is a great deal to be said for having the freedom to pursue one's own vision without having it diluted or altered by others. But what about those creators who, for one reason or another, choose to work as part of a collaborative team as either a writer or an artist? I tracked down a couple of top writers, **Chris Claremont** and **Steven Grant**, to get their points of view.

Claremont, whose work can be seen every other month in ***Aliens/Predator: The Deadliest of the Species***, had this to say about what first attracted him to comics: "I started out writing prose and wandered into comics after the fact. It looked like it was a lot of fun, and seemed like the next best thing to making movies. Working in comics has some of the same excitement as improvisational theater—or a tennis game. The interaction between writer and artist is very visceral and immediate. Writing prose, you work alone."

Grant, who is writing ***X*** and the upcoming miniseries ***Enemy***, took things a bit further in explaining the differences between comics and prose, and comics and motion pictures: "I like the visual aspects of comics, but I also like the literary, or prose aspects. Comics are a very strange form—a combination of words and pictures, not one or the other. When you're writing comics, you're required to think visually, but the finished work is not simply visual. It's a unique balance between prose and picture that you don't find in any other medium, and it allows for a whole different level of expression.

"A lot of people think comics are 'movies on paper,' and that's dead wrong. They're something unique all to themselves, and I believe the medium itself is still in the process of defining itself—still in the process of being born."

To get an artist's perspective, I went to **Cam Kennedy**, the artist on ***Star Wars: Dark Empire***, and the recently released *Batman/Judge Dredd: Judgment on Gotham*. Kennedy touched on the same pleasures to be found in collaboration as Chris Claremont, but he also brought up an aspect that directly involves you, the comics reader: "I worked as a painter in France for seven years, and dearly loved it. But when I came back to Scotland, I got involved with comics and found it was a wonderfully fast medium for me to turn the ideas inside my head into something tangible. Comics also gave me a chance to work with people who would come up with ideas that seemed completely irrational—until you began to think about them and put them on paper, and discovered that they could work.

"Another thing I've always loved is the feedback from fans. Comics give people an awful lot of pleasure, and meeting fans at conventions allows you to see that firsthand. To get that kind of feedback from doing a professional job is a great thing."

He's absolutely right, you know. Your comments to creators, either face to face at conventions, or through the mail, are a way to bring the interactive nature of comic books full circle, from creator to reader to creator. So complete the circle, write to your favorite comics creator(s). Get out there and interact.

—Randy Stradley
creative director

FEB. CHECKLIST

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 1
- ☐ ROBOCOP: ROULETTE #3

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 8
- ☐ ATLAS #1
- ☐ CARAVAN KIDD VALENTINE'S DAY SPECIAL #1
- ☐ DARK HORSE PRESENTS #82
- ☐ NINA'S NEW & IMPROVED ALL-TIME GREATEST COLLECTORS' ITEM CLASSIC COMICS #1
- ☐ OUT OF THE VORTEX #6
- ☐ THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD: ETERNAL VOWS #3
- ☐ VERSION #2.7

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 15
- ☐ AGE OF REPTILES #4
- ☐ ALIENS: VOLUME 2 #21 (U.K. EDITION)
- ☐ ALIENS: MUSIC OF THE SPEARS #2
- ☐ DARK HORSE INSIDER #28
- ☐ GRENDEL TALES: DEVIL'S HAMMER #1
- ☐ INDIANA JONES AND THE ARMS OF GOLD #1
- ☐ THE MARK #3
- ☐ MAX OVERLOAD #1
- ☐ STAR WARS: TALES OF THE JEDI #5

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 22
- ☐ CATALYST: AGENTS OF CHANGE #1
- ☐ COLORS IN BLACK #1
- ☐ DANGER UNLIMITED #1
- ☐ DARK HORSE COMICS #18
- ☐ ENEMY #3
- ☐ THE GEOF DARROW PRINT SERIES #2: HARD BOILED
- ☐ HELLHOUNDS #1
- ☐ PREDATOR: BAD BLOOD #3
- ☐ THE SHADOW: IN THE COILS OF THE LEVIATHAN #3

SHIPPING MARCH 1
- ☐ CLASSIC STAR WARS #17
- ☐ INDIANA JONES: THUNDER IN THE ORIENT #6
- ☐ RACK & PAIN #1
- ☐ ROBOCOP: ROULETTE #4
- ☐ SIN CITY: A DAME TO KILL FOR #4
- ☐ X #2

GBF